

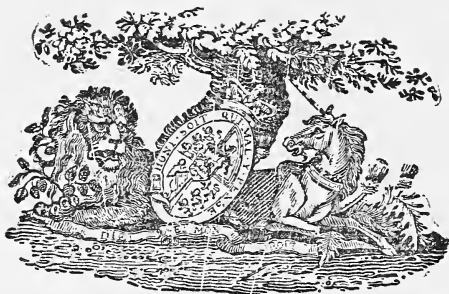
710
P35

“They Live on a Rock
in the Sea!”

*The Isles of Shoals
in Colonial Days*

CHARLES PENROSE, JR.





"Were American Newcomen to do naught else, our work is well done if we succeed in sharing with America a strengthened inspiration to continue the struggle towards a nobler Civilization—through wider knowledge and understanding of the hopes, ambitions, and deeds of leaders in the past who have upheld Civilization's material progress. As we look backward, let us look forward."

—CHARLES PENROSE

*Senior Vice-President for North America
The Newcomen Society of England*



This statement, crystallizing a broad purpose of the society, was first read at the Newcomen Meeting at New York World's Fair on August 5, 1939, when American Newcomen were guests of The British Government

"Actorum Memores simul affectamus Agenda"

“THEY LIVE ON A ROCK IN THE SEA!”

The Isles of Shoals in Colonial Days

An Address in New England



AMERICA'S HERITAGE, at least in part, springs from the courage, fortitude, and resourcefulness of the Colonists in their everyday lives. These pioneers, along the wilderness shores of the Atlantic Seaboard and on the islands offshore, developed sinews of strength which have endured in their descendants. This narrative of lives "on a Rock in the Sea" is both colorful and typical!





*Within sight and sound
of the Sea!*

8

On Star Island

“They Live on a Rock
in the Sea!”

*The Isles of Shoals
in Colonial Days*

CHARLES PENROSE, JR.

MEMBER OF THE NEWCOMEN SOCIETY
PHILADELPHIA AND NEW YORK



THE NEWCOMEN SOCIETY IN NORTH AMERICA
NEW YORK SAN FRANCISCO MONTREAL

1957

F
42
18
1957

Copyright, 1957
CHARLES PENROSE, JR.



*Permission to abstract is granted
provided proper credit is allowed*



*The Newcomen Society, as a body,
is not responsible for opinions
expressed in the following pages*



First Printing: September 1957



*This Newcomen Address, dealing with the
colorful history of the Isles of Shoals, was
delivered at the "1957 New Hampshire Lunch-
eon" of The Newcomen Society in North
America, held in Ballroom of Hotel Rocking-
ham, Portsmouth, New Hampshire, U.S.A.,
when Mr. Penrose was the guest of
honor, on September 17, 1957*



SET UP, PRINTED AND BOUND IN THE UNITED STATES
OF AMERICA FOR THE NEWCOMEN PUBLICATIONS IN
NORTH AMERICA BY PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS





INTRODUCTION OF MR. PENROSE, AT PORTSMOUTH, ON
SEPTEMBER 17, 1957, BY CHARLES PENROSE, B.SC., E.E.,
LL.D., D.ENG., LITT.D., L.H.D., F.R.S.A., THE SENIOR
VICE-PRESIDENT FOR NORTH AMERICA, IN THE SOCIETY.

My fellow members of Newcomen:

WE are met here at the historic seaport town of Portsmouth, whose prestige at one time rivalled that of Boston itself. We are met beside banks of a fast-flowing tidal Piscataqua, upon whose ebb and flow there journeyed during colonial days those many sails bound for the West Indies, for England, or for other coastwise towns in the British Colonies in North America. In short, we are met where early American Maritime history was made. John Paul Jones of Portsmouth added lustre to that history!



It was this same Piscataqua which furnished a salty channel to the Sea and for those hardy fishermen who dwelt at Gosport upon the rocky Isles of Shoals, which are within distant sight of where we meet this day.



And so it is appropriate that the present Newcomen Address, dealing with the lives and pursuits of those same fishermen, should be delivered at Portsmouth. And it was here, too, that His Majesty's Governor of the Royal Colony of New-Hampshire had his seat of government, centering in the Governor's Mansion which still stands. To these Colonial Governors did the people of the Isles of Shoals make their petitions upon occasion.

1969

It would appear appropriate, likewise, that this narrative we are about to hear and the considerable research which it entailed should be undertaken by a younger member of the Society, who, although a Philadelphian, has been privileged to know coastwise New Hampshire and its adjacent Southern Maine since he was a small boy—and to become intrigued by the colorful and often romantic background of the Isles of Shoals. He comes naturally by an interest in the Sea and its lore, because his family during four generations were colonial shipbuilders in Pennsylvania.



As to our speaker's interest in the Society let it be said that, at the age of fourteen, he suggested the subject of what we made our "1935 Newcomen Pilgrimage." That was twenty-two years ago—and he still is interested.



And so I approach the happy task of introducing: CHARLES PENROSE, JR., our speaker.



His own active background centers in two directions: the United States Army and the pulp and paper industry.



At the age of 18, he enlisted as a private in the First Troop, Philadelphia City Cavalry, the so-called and famous "City Troop," which was General Washington's bodyguard throughout the American Revolution. Our speaker's ancestor, Samuel Penrose, was one of the seven founders of the Troop. Most of the Penroses, through the generations, have served in this same cavalry unit, including both of our speaker's brothers.



At the time of Charles Penrose, Jr.'s enlistment, the United States of America had not yet entered the Second World War, but the Nation was alerted to defense and Pearl Harbor was less than a year ahead.

Like many other units in the National Guard, the City Troop was destined ultimately to serve, both collectively and individually, in numerous branches of the Armed Forces. And so it resulted that our speaker saw military service in a quite extraordinary number of branches: Cavalry, Mechanized Cavalry, and the U.S. Air Corps (now the U.S. Air Force).



As a Captain in the Air Corps, he served in the Pacific theatre in New Guinea, the Halmaheras, the Philippines, and the Ryukyus, including Okinawa. He had contacts likewise with Australia and New Zealand.



The Second World War at an end, he returned to USA, and there followed some nine years' experience in the Paper Industry, successively with: Fitchburg Paper Company; the 100-year-old A. M. Collins Manufacturing Company, of which he was a Vice-President; and, later, when the latter was acquired by International Paper Company, he was connected with "I.P." headquarters at New York.



Early this year, he resigned from International Paper to become a needed Assistant to him who now introduces our speaker. In this, he made his own decision—and to great benefit both to his Father and to the Society.



His years of industrial experience were interrupted by the Korean War, in that he was called back into U.S. Army service, this time as a Captain in Field Artillery in Western Germany. In other words, our speaker has served in both the Pacific and European theatres.



At the end of this final tour of duty, he became an Honorary Member of the Philadelphia City Troop, having had 14 years of active or reserve military service.

And so, *Gentlemen*, I give you a younger member of this international Society: one upon whose efforts and intelligent interest and initiative the now 15,000 of you can rely with confidence—in future days.



I introduce a member of The Society of American Historians and of other bodies within the broad fields of history. I introduce: CHARLES PENROSE, JR., of Philadelphia and New York.





My fellow members of Newcomen:

DURING *Nineteen Hundred and Fifty-Seven* we have seen two interesting and dramatic commemorative occasions take place at Plymouth, Massachusetts and at Jamestown, Virginia. Separate yet related in the perspective of our Country's early history, these historic celebrations tend to make our present discussion of The Isles of Shoals timely and certainly not inappropriate.



We refer first to the arrival at Plymouth on June 11th of the 180-ton squarerigged bark *Mayflower II*—53 days out of Plymouth, England and some 337 years after the original *Mayflower* had landed her courageous band of Pilgrims under Governor John Carver and Captain Miles Standish, thus establishing the historic Plymouth Colony on December 21st, 1620.



The other dramatic occasion, of course, is the great festival at Jamestown commemorating the founding 350 years ago, on May 13th, 1607, of the first permanent English settlement on the shores of North America. Jamestown, destined to become in 1619 the seat of the first representative assembly in the New World, was guided through her early periods of severe hardship by the bold leadership of Captain John Smith.

It indeed is unlikely that such celebrations will ever center either national or international attention upon The Isles of Shoals, those "*rocks in the sea*," off the coast of New Hampshire and Maine. However, if such were held it is reasonable to assume that both Captain John Smith and Captain Miles Standish would be present in spirit, inasmuch as *each* had reason, as we shall see, to remember the Shoals.



Before turning our attention, *Mr. Chairman*, to the early years of the Seventeenth Century—even back before Jamestown's 1607 and Plymouth's 1620—and the earliest beginnings of these legendary Isles of Shoals, let us drop back *first* to the Year 1800.



The War of Independence is history. America, under President John Adams, is cautiously confident but dependent, in great measure, upon her ocean commerce. We are in Portsmouth, New-Hampshire upon banks of the swift flowing Piscataqua River which divides the State of New Hampshire and the District of Maine. Making our way through the bustling streets past the New-Hampshire Hotel, we come to the famous Portsmouth Pier where we are to meet Captain John Caswell of Gosport Village, Star Island, Isles of Shoals.



We are amazed by what we see. The Portsmouth Pier, recently completed and unfortunately destined to burn to the water in the great conflagration of 1813, stretches out into the Piscataqua 340 feet with a breadth of 60 feet. On its south side a warehouse divided into 14 stores extends 321 feet along the pier, 30 feet wide, and 3 stories high. Facing it along the north side of the pier is a similar warehouse divided into 2 stores. These stores are brimming with merchandise—liquors, molasses, sugar, salt, coffee, and other goods brought to Portsmouth by her fleet of ocean-going vessels.



Asking my way, I am directed to Joseph Walker's Sail Loft on the third floor of the south warehouse, where I am to meet Captain Caswell. He is awaiting my arrival and after the usual introductory

amenities we descend the steep, narrow stairs to the pier and walk out to where his sloop, the *Hannah Starr*, is made fast. In answer to questions, I discover that Portsmouth's fleet *in this Year of 1800* includes 28 ships, 47 brigs, 10 schooners, and 1 bark—thrown in for good measure. 17 of these vessels were built here on the Piscataqua this year and, oh yes, an additional 20 coastal craft should be mentioned. It was evident that the Seaport of Portsmouth was no idle place and figured importantly in the Nation's economy!



Jumping aboard the *Hannah Starr*, we cast off and take good advantage of the wind and the fast-running Piscataqua's ebb tide. Following the winding channel we pass Fernald's Island, destined to be purchased by the United States Government from Captain William Dennett in 1806 for the establishment of a Naval Shipyard. Quickly the busy wharves, the church steeples, and the handsome mansions of Portsmouth fade in the sparkling brilliance of a mid-September cloudless afternoon. Captain Caswell points out the quaint, elm-shaded villages of Kittery and Kittery Point, Maine, with Gerrish and Cutts Islands beyond, which slip by to port. An equally picturesque New Castle passes on our starboard side as we approach old Fort William and Mary—known as Fort Constitution since the Revolution. We emerge onto the broad swells of the majestic Atlantic and feel the breeze quicken. Whitecaps jump and dance as far as the eye can see. To the northeast a long segment of Southern Maine's rocky coast disappears in the far distance, anchored by The Nubble at Cape Neddick. A few points to the right is the infamous Boon Island where the *Nottingham Galley*, out of London bound for Boston, foundered on the night of December 11th, 1710.



To the south the coasts of New-Hampshire and Massachusetts curve away in the gentle arc of Ipswich Bay, with Cape Ann and Thatcher's Island beyond. Sails dot the horizon and schools of fish are to be seen rippling the ocean's surface. Heading southeast from the mouth of the Piscataqua we notice a group of low lying rocky islands some nine miles to sea. As you may suspect they are our destination—The Isles of Shoals!

As we close on the Islands they take on individuality of shape, size, and elevation. Their relative position each to the other comes into focus. Although the seas are relatively calm and the winds moderate one is impressed by the endless succession of breaking rollers cascading not only on the rocky shores of the nine islands comprising the Shoals but on and over the many outlying ledges and rocks: Cedar Island Ledge, Eastern Rocks, Anderson's Ledge, Mingo and Shag Rocks, White Island Ledge, and others. Woe be-tide the mariner, *observes Captain Caswell*, who treats these formidable obstacles lightly or is unaware of their presence in fog or storm!



Standing in towards the Shoals we see the masts of perhaps a dozen small fishing craft swinging quietly at their moorings in the distance of Gosport Harbor. This small haven, the only one worthy of such description at the Shoals, is protected to the north by Appledore Island, to the northeast by Smuttynose, Malaga, and Cedar Islands and on the south by Star Island, on whose 90 odd acres of rock and turf is situated the village of Gosport. Figures, tiny in the distance, can be seen moving near the fish houses and stages (or piers) and activity can be discerned among the cottages of the Star Islanders.



Captain Caswell tells us that the islands were divided in 1635 between Maine and New-Hampshire—the boundary line passing through Gosport Harbor. The northern islands—Duck, Appledore, Malaga, Smuttynose, and Cedar placed under jurisdiction (if you could call it that at the time) of Maine; the southern—Star, Lunging, White, and Seavey's under New-Hampshire. From Duck Island in the north to White Island in the south the isles stretch approximately two and three quarters miles, roughly from NE to SW. Barren, rough, and craggy they encompass some 350 acres of land—a small percentage of which might be deemed suitable for tilling or worthy of forage.



Before entering Gosport Harbor we fix the islands in our minds. To our left some one and one half miles to the NE is Duck Island—small, uninhabited, and surrounded by treacherous rocks and

reefs. To our right, close by, is Lunging Island, sometimes known as Londoner's and perhaps named in former times by the fishermen of the London Company in the 1600's. About 15 acres, it is slightly larger than Duck Island. Further to starboard—perhaps a mile and a quarter to the southwest—lies White Island and, connected to it at low tide, Seavey's. Both comprise about ten acres and are the southernmost of the entire group. On White Island a light-house was to be built in 1820.



Dead ahead lies the entrance to Gosport Harbor with Smuttynose, Malaga, and Cedar Islands partially closing off the far end of the harbor from the seemingly endless expanse of the Atlantic beyond. On our left is Appledore Island—the largest and greenest, with some 130 acres of land rising to an elevation of 50 feet. First known as Hog Island, it has held its present name since 1661 when it was named after the small village of Appledore on the Devonshire coast of England. Not a tree is to be seen on any island, but a profusion of low shrubs—bayberry, blackberry, and the like—cover much of Appledore. We continue on into the harbor, with Star Island and Gosport Village to starboard. Star Island, second in size to Appledore, has been the predominant center of population, commercial activity, and religious and civil affairs since the 1680's, when most of the islanders “threw in their lot” with New-Hampshire and moved over to Gosport. Perhaps the extremely avuncular Puritanism of the Massachusetts-Bay Colony nudged the independent Shoalers across the boundary of Gosport Harbor.



Star Island, given its name possibly because of its rough configuration to the points of a star, might have taken its name from Miss Hannah Starr. John Cutt, an early land owner with extensive fisheries at the Shoals married Miss Starr of Boston on July 30th, 1662. The origin of Captain Caswell's name for his sloop became clear as he gave me this information.



Gosport Village takes its name from the small seaport of Gosport in Hampshire, England. Pleasantly enough, *old* Gosport is

situated on Portsmouth Harbor across from Portsmouth, *England*. It was an important victualling station for English ships during the 16th and 17th Centuries—just as the Gosport of the Shoals has been a source of countless hogsheads of fish for the tables of the old and new worlds.



Captain Caswell turns his attention back to the job at hand. Protected from the swells of the open seas we work our way through the cluster of fishing craft and pick up our mooring. After putting the sloop to rights we row ashore. We are at Gosport, Star Island, Isles of Shoals.



The Captain and I are becoming fast friends. Perhaps it is because he senses our genuine interest in the Shoals and her history—a subject which he himself enjoys and, somewhat curiously—being of a taciturn bent—seems inclined to share. A rugged, weather-beaten man with blue eyes and a warm smile, I judge him to be in his mid-'thirties. He was to be the subject of the following entry in the *Town Records of Gosport* (covering fitfully and sparsely town affairs from 1731 through 1863 and now in the custody of the Secretary of State of New Hampshire at Concord)—“John Caswell the head man of this Island departed this Life—January 24th, 1825 after a painful and lingering illness, aged 60 years.” After generously inviting us to share supper and stay the night at his cottage he excused himself and we feel free to roam about Star Island.



Emerging from that long-ago September afternoon in 1800, we now find ourselves—or I trust some of us still do—here at Portsmouth, on September 17th, 1957. Permit me to use words employed by two men of letters to describe Star Island which they visited and enjoyed at a time when there still existed those quaint and rough surroundings so familiar to our friend, Captain Caswell. Nathaniel Hawthorne's *diary*, as published in *American Note-Books*, gives us a delightful description of his impression of Gosport. He wrote these words during his stay on Appledore Island in the late Summer of 1852:

"Their houses (fisherman) stand in pretty close neighborhood to one another, scattered about without the slightest regularity or pretence of a street, there being no wheel-carriages on the island. Some of the houses are very comfortable two-story dwellings. I saw two or three, I think, with flowers. There are also one or two trees on the island. There is a strong odor of fishiness and the little cove is full of mackerel-boats, and other small craft for fishing, in some of which little boys of no growth at all were paddling about . . . here and there a little enclosure of richer grass, built round with a strong stone-wall . . . each small proprietor fencing off his little bit of tillage or grass."



Samuel Adams Drake in his delightful *Nooks and Corners of the New England Coast* describes the fish-houses of Star Island as they then existed in 1875 and had, undoubtedly with little change, for over 200 years:

"Tubs of trawls, a barrel or two of fish-oil, a pile of split fish, and the half of a hogshead, in which a 'kentle' or so of 'merchantable fish' had just been salted down, were here and there; a hand-barrow on which to carry the fish from the boat, a lobster-pot, and a pair of rusty scales, ought to be added to the inventory. Sou'-westers and suits of oil-skin clothing hung against the walls; and in the loft overhead were a spare block or two and a parcel of oars, evidently picked up adrift, there being no two of the same length. In some of the houses were whale-boats, that had been hauled up to be calked and painted, that the men were preparing to launch. They were all schooner-rigged, and some were decked over so to furnish a little cuddy for bad weather. No more seaworthy craft can be found, and under guidance of a practiced hand one will sail, as sea-folk say, 'like a witch'. They usually contained a coil of half-inch line for the road, a 'killick', and a brace of powder-kegs for the trawls."

Perhaps now we have a bit of the "flavour" of this tiny, isolated community as it was with its fisherfolk and their livelihood—the sea. All that is now long past. The permanent year-around population of the Shoals can be counted today on the fingers of a single hand.

September 17th, 1800. We have returned to *Captain Caswell's Gosport cottage*. Evening meal, a good one built around a steaming fish chowder, is over. The Captain fills his pipe, lights it, and settles back in his chair. He begins to talk of the Shoals—her present and her past. As closely as I can recall, his remarks—substantially—are:—

You've asked me to tell you of these Islands. There's much to say—so much, in fact, that I can only give you a little of “the feel” of it. If you had more than that you'd only feel your chair coming out your ear. *Caswell continued:* Things aren't too good here anymore. What you might call “the golden days” for the Shoals are long past. The population has decreased from a high of perhaps 600 during the era from 1660 to 1770 to the present total of 112—92 here on Star, none on Appledore, and only 20 people over on Smuttynose. In 1775, when the authorities on the mainland ordered us to abandon these islands because of the Revolution and the danger of occupation by the British, it hurt us “for keeps.” The majority haven't come back and won't. It's easier to make a living ashore, I suppose, and the fishing isn't what it used to be here. Well, all in all, the Shoalers have enjoyed—sometimes more, sometimes less—almost 150 years of livelihood from the sea; from 1628, when we have first definite record of permanent settlers here, until the order to abandon in 1775. Some of the life sort of went out of the people and the community when The Reverend John Tucke died, in 1773. Mr. Tucke had been our Minister and friend for 41 years here at Gosport—ever since 1732, seven years after he graduated at Harvard. In 1790, the old frame Meeting House here on Star Island—built back in 1720—burned to the ground. That didn't help morale any—particularly when you consider the rumor that it had been wickedly put to the torch. But things are looking up a bit—at least in that direction. We're building a new Meeting House right now and hope to Dedicate it in November. Perhaps you saw it this afternoon up on the highest part of the island—just a few steps from here.



Captain Caswell continued:—Before saying something of the early beginnings here at the Shoals let's look back to voyages made

by Columbus and Cabot which set the stage for colonization and development of our New England coast. Christopher Columbus, sailing under the Spanish Flag, landed on San Salvadore Island in the Bahamas on October 12, 1492, thereby discovering the new lands of the Americas. John Cabot, sailing from Bristol, England in 1497, reached and cruised North American shores. His discoveries, made under patent granted by Henry VII, formed the basis for English claims along the eastern seaboard. The rulers of Europe, by this time, were "bitten" by the "bug" of further discovery, occupation, and exploitation of the new lands discovered to the west. Patents were issued, intrepid Captains with ships and crews were assembled and, during the following 16th Century, the flags of England, France, Spain, Italy, and Portugal explored and cruised our coastal waters. As a result, throughout the 1500's, ships of many European nations came not only to explore but to fish the waters of Newfoundland and New England.



Sir Walter Raleigh, under Elizabeth I, was to establish the short-lived and ill-fated colonies on Roanoke Island during 1585 and again in 1587. Bartholomew Gosnold, a companion of Raleigh in these endeavours, sailed from England in 1602 aboard the *Concord* and reached New England near Cape Ann—not more than easy sail from where we are now. Gosnold undoubtedly passed close by the Isles of Shoals on the morning of May 14th, 1602, when he first sighted land "well neere the latitude of 43 degrees." Cruising the coast, Captain Gosnold with four of his men landed on Cape Cod, thereby becoming, so far as we know, the first Englishman to step foot on the New England coast.



In April of the following year, 1603, the merchants of Bristol, England—having raised £1000 Sterling—sponsored an expedition under Captain Martin Pring whose command included the 50-ton ship *Speedwell* and the 26-ton bark *Discoverer* with a combined crew of 43 men. Pring explored the coasts of Maine and New Hampshire, noting the mouths of the Saco, Kennebunk, and York Rivers, as well as the Piscataqua. The latter he entered and explored to a depth of some six miles. Reporting afterwards to Sir

Ferdinando Gorges, the guiding hand behind this and so many other expeditions, Captain Pring spoke of sighting a multitude of small islands in about 43 degrees latitude and anchoring in the shelter of the greatest. Most probably he was referring to Gosport Harbor—sheltered as it is by Appledore and Star Islands, by far largest of the isles. Our latitude at White Island is $42^{\circ} 58''$ which shapes up pretty close to Pring's 43° . It's fun to speculate that Captain Pring and his men may have been the first Englishmen to land at the Shoals—perhaps rowing ashore in search of fresh water—which they would have found at Appledore's spring—or merely to satisfy normal curiosity.



In the following years, a succession of expeditions passed by the Shoals. Weymouth in 1605 under Gorges' patronage. Pierre de Guast, under patent of the King of France, Henry of Navarre, accompanied by Samuel Champlain de Brouage, sailed along the coast on July 15th, 1605 and reported that "on the east, two leagues distant, we saw three or four rather prominent islands, and on the west Ipswitch Bay." The three or four islands were the Isles of Shoals.



On May 31st, 1607, an expedition sailed from Plymouth, England under George Popham to establish the first settlement in New England at the mouth of the Kennebec River. Known as the Popham Colony it took its name from Sir John Popham, Chief Justice of England, who with Gorges had been instrumental in securing their charter from King James. This colony was short-lived. President George Popham died and the colonists returned to England in 1608 in a ship which they built themselves—the first to be constructed in New England. It was the *Virginia*.



Jamestown, the first permanent English settlement in America, was founded on May 13th of this same year under Captain John Smith. This was an era of excitement and activity along the North American coast. Settlements were to spring up with ever-increasing rapidity. Who could guess in those early days that—168 years after

the establishment of Jamestown by the great Captain John Smith—the last Governor of the Royal Province of New Hampshire, John Wentworth, before sailing from Gosport for England would complete his last official duty on New Hampshire soil in September 1775 *at the Shoals*. The same Isles of Shoals which in 1614 were first definitely visited, named, and charted by Captain Smith.



Smith, in the employ of some merchants of London, sailed from that city on March 3rd, 1614. His command included two vessels, a ship and a bark, with a crew of 45 men. He arrived at Monhegan late in April. The object of his voyage, he writes, was “to take whales, and also to make trials of a mine of gold or copper; if these failed, fish and furs were then our refuge.” Neither gold nor copper mines materialized. Smith, leaving most of his crew to fish, sailed along the coast in several small boats with eight men, exploring and trading successfully with the Indians for furs. It was during this cruise, which took him as far as Cape Cod, that he visited the Shoals. Returning to Monhegan he sailed for England on July 8th, leaving his second in command, Thomas Hunt, to take the other vessel with its cargo of fish to Spain. Following Captain Smith’s return to England, he published an account of his voyage and discoveries, as well as forming a Chart of the coast. Smith’s *History of New-England*—as Prince Charles named the new region—was first published at London in 1616.



In this account Smith states that “Among the remarkablest Isles and mountains for landmarks are Smiths Isles, a heape together, none neare them, against Accominticus.” And so it was that out of all the lands which Captain John Smith had discovered in North America the Isles of Shoals were first known and appeared on Smith’s chart as his own “Smiths Isles.”



Captain Smith writes: “He is a very bad fisher that cannot kill in one day with his hook and line one, two, or three *hundred* cods, and is it not pretty sport to pull up two pence, six pence, and twelve

pence, as fast as you can hale and veare a line?" Certainly he recognized the value of these waters in terms of fish, and when the patentees of New England devised a scheme to cast lots for the various portions of their territory he wrote: "But no lot for me but Smiths Isles, which are a many of barren rocks, the most overgrowne with such shrubs and sharp whins you can hardly pass them, without either grass or wood, but three or four short shrubby old cedars."



In 1615, the London Company sent over four ships to fish the waters around the Shoals. By mid-June their ships were loaded and sailed—one for Spain, one for Jamestown, Virginia, and two for England. During this same year Captain Smith, under the personal sponsorship of Gorges and some of his friends, again sailed with two ships for New England. His purpose was to establish a settlement—presumably on the coast of either Maine or New Hampshire. Smith was captured by French pirates and his companions in the other vessel failed in their mission.



Several years passed, during which a number of expeditions reached our shores. Sir Richard Hawkins, President of the Plymouth Council, voyaged here in the Winter of 1615 and finding strife amongst the Indians returned to England with a cargo of fish. Richard Vines and his company, sponsored by Gorges, wintered near Saco in 1617 and returned.



In the Spring of 1617, Captain Smith, commissioned Admiral of New England by the Plymouth Council, was prepared to set out once again with 3 ships, their crews, and 15 settlers. Again his purpose was the same as it had been two years before—settlement. The voyage was abandoned, however, after unfavourable winds had delayed him for several months. Unfortunately, Captain John Smith, Admiral of New England, was never again destined to sail to our coast. Who knows, if winds had not interfered he might have established a settlement here at the Shoals or, as they were then known, Smiths Isles.

Captain Caswell refilled his pipe. Glancing through the window I could see the moonlight playing over the peaceful stillness of Gosport Harbor. A faint moaning—the seas rolling against the islands—filled the night. A dog barked—answered by his own echo among the rocks of Star Island. It felt good to enjoy the snugness of the Caswell home.



Caswell spoke again:—We could discuss indefinitely the political ramifications, the many claims, and the personages identified with the settlement of the Maine and New-Hampshire coasts—all connected with the beginnings and subsequent growth here at the Shoals. For our purposes let me mention 1623. In this year Sir Ferdinando Gorges, President of the Plymouth Council and Captain John Mason, its Secretary, secured a Grant from the members of Council—the governing body under James I—for the development of New England. This Grant entitled them to all the lands—known as Laconia—between the Merrimack and Kennebunk Rivers. It extended inland to the great lakes and to the St. Lawrence. As a result, Gorges and Mason sent over the “Company of Laconia” under David Thompson, a fishmonger of London, and others. Thompson settled at Little Harbor at the mouth of the Piscataqua—the first settlement in New-Hampshire. Strawberry Bank—later known as Portsmouth—was to follow.



It is interesting as well as important to bear in mind that even before the Laconia Company settled on the mainland the Shoals were occupied over the years as a fishing station—temporarily during the fishing season even if not as a permanent settlement. The many fishing expeditions which visited the waters about the Shoals made use of the islands to land and cure their catches. Stages were built and flakes—drying racks—were erected. Undoubtedly some sort of rude shelter must have been provided for the men engaged in drying, curing, and packing the fish.



Captain Christopher Levett, arriving at the Shoals in 1623 with a patent for six thousand acres of vacant land on the mainland,

wrote: "The first place I set foot upon in New England was the Isles of Shoulds, being islands in the sea, about two leagues from the main. Upon these islands I neither could see one good timber tree, nor so much ground as to make a garden. The place is found to be a good fishing place for six ships, but more cannot well be there, for want of convenient stage room, as this year's experience hath proved. The harbor is but indifferent good. Upon these islands are no savages at all."



During the same year, 1623, Captain Miles Standish of the Plymouth Colony—founded three years before—is reported to have come to the Shoals for the purpose of securing provisions for the hard-pressed Pilgrims. It's reasonable to assume that he may have been successful—in fish, at the least.



We have our first definite record of permanent settlers here *in* 1628. An assessment of Two Pounds Sterling was made against 2 men named Jeffrey and Burslem. This was their share in the expense of sending back to England Thomas Morton of Merry-mount who was reputed to have endangered the early settlements by trading firearms with the Indians. Captured by Captain Miles Standish at Wollaston, Morton was brought to the Shoals and put aboard ship for England. The islands, even at this early date, were a port of arrival and departure. Jeffrey and Burslem may well have been sailors from one of the many fishing expeditions to headquarter at the Shoals. Very likely they decided to remain behind and try their fortunes as the first of the permanent "Shoalers." In any event, they were to be joined by others for, when Governor Winthrop sailed past on Friday, June 11, 1630 on his way to settle at Salem and Boston, he mentions that "The Isles of Shoals were now within two leagues of us and we saw a ship lie there at anchor and five or six shallops under sail up and down. We took many mackerels and met a shallop which stood from Cape Ann towards the Isle of Shoals which belonged to some English fishermen." In his *History of New-England*, Winthrop states that the settlement at the Shoals was so great in 1634 that its assessed property

equalled New Plymouth, and that at least seventeen fishing vessels arrived here from Europe in March.



Meanwhile, the Gorges and Mason interests on the mainland continued to grow until, in 1635, a division of property split the Shoals—a valued possession to each party—with Gorges taking the northern group into his subsequent Province of Maine, and Mason the southern isles into what was to become New-Hampshire.



During the period 1635 through 1655 the Shoals grew rapidly. Population increased and the fisheries expanded. Thousands of English immigrated into New England. Many were from the sea-ports of England. Some of them, having either heard of or fished the waters around the Shoals in previous voyages, must have decided to settle where they could carry on their calling. Homes were established on Appledore, Smuttynose, Cedar, and Star Islands.



The Shoals, interestingly enough, were to become an Ecclesiastical problem. Mason and Gorges were both Episcopalian; Winthrop's Massachusetts Bay was Puritan. Prior to 1640, The Reverend Joseph Hull, an Episcopalian, of Agamenticus (now York) visited Appledore to preach and administer the Holy Sacraments. The Reverend Richard Gibson, first Episcopal Minister at Strawberry Bank (Portsmouth), held Services at the Shoals during 1640 and 1641. A graduate of Magdalen College at Oxford, Gibson had come to New England in 1636 as Minister for the Trelawny settlement at Richmond Island near what now is Portland. When, in 1642, the Puritan Massachusetts-Bay Colony claimed New Hampshire and Maine as belonging within her jurisdiction, it followed that any Anglican influence at the Shoals was anathema. Accordingly, the magistrates at Boston arraigned Gibson—"he being wholly addicted to the hierarchy and discipline of England, did exercise a ministerial function in the same way and did marry and baptize at the Isle of Shoals which was now found to be within our jurisdiction." Summoned to Boston, he was held, but since, as

Governor Winthrop said: "He was a stranger, and was to depart the country in a few days, he was discharged without any fine or other punishment." So much, *observed Captain Caswell*, for that display of early religious intolerance.



1645 was a milestone in the history of the Shoals. It marked the arrival from England of John and Richard Cutt—and perhaps Robert—all brothers of apparent substance. They were to become the leading merchants, public spirited citizens, and among the wealthiest men of their day. After establishing themselves at the Shoals in fishing and properties, both John and Richard removed to the mainland, John settling at Portsmouth and Richard at New Castle. Robert arrived on the Piscataqua several years after his two older brothers, having gone first, it is believed, to St. Christophers and then to the Barbadoes. It is likely that he carried on business with his brothers while in the West Indies—receiving fish shipped by John and Richard from the Shoals and sending back rum, molasses, and other commodities in exchange.



In 1679, John Cutt was appointed by Charles II to be first President of Council for the Government of the Province of New-Hampshire. At his death on April 5th, 1681, he left his "beloved son, John Cutt, . . . my warehouse on Star Island" and his "beloved son, Samuel Cutt, . . . ye warehouse on Smuttynose Island."



Richard Cutt, who was even more extensively involved in the fisheries at the Shoals than brother John, willed his son-in-law, William Vaughan, his "housinge at the Iles of shoules on Star Ileland together wth that Estate boath in stocke & depts that is in Ptnership w^t him ther."



Robert Cutt, like his brothers, accumulated a sizeable estate. A close friend of Francis Champenowne, his neighbor at Kittery, they were jointly appointed Justices of the Peace, in 1665, with authority to manage all the affairs of that portion of the Province of Maine.

The Cutt brothers—the family name known after 1745 as *Cutts*—were all closely identified with the Shoals and a substantial portion of their wealth, particularly John's and Richard's, must have derived from the profitable fisheries they maintained for many years here on our islands.



Captain Caswell handed me a sheaf of papers, suggesting that I might enjoy reading a few of the old Probate Records pertaining to the Shoals (*State Papers of New Hampshire*: Vol XXXI, Vol I—1635-1717).



Glancing through them, I came upon the *Last Will and Testament* of Walter Matthews, dated April 15th, 1678. It read, in part: “. . . I doe give unto my Son Samuel Matthews, my now new dwelling house wth the garden on Smuttinose Iland, One of the Ilands of Shoales; my storehouse, oyle house, and all my part of my Stages mooreing places, and mooreings, my new boat, with the furniture, and tackling, thereunto belonging; also eleaven long flakes, wth the laying roome, lying between my dwelling house, and my Storehouse, Towards the south.” In addition, Fisherman Matthews generously remembered his nephew, Matthews Young, giving him—among other things . . . “my old dwelling house wth the leantoe, my old boat, if in being . . . fowre flakes . . . with the priviledge of spreading fish . . . the second best feather bed . . . one best Chest.” An inventory of Matthews' estate, made on May 29th, 1678, totaled £1310-18-6—a handsome sum for those days.



On September 19th, 1699, Eleanor Wilcomb, . . . “one hur bead being in perfit memory” decreed “I'y my will is that I comit my Soule to god that gave it (and) my Body to the dust: amen . . . I doue bequeath unto my son John Muchemore my new boat which now John Currier is master all all hur apportinances . . . my son John Michemor shall tacke Care of Joseph Yurring to bring him up in the feare of God and to such Larring as is Conveneant for one of his degree . . . John Muchemore Shall have the twenty hds of salt that I bought of gouv^r Partrige to help de-

fray the Childs Charg." Her estate, inventoried October 12th, 1699 by James Blagdon and Richard Goss, amounted to £383-13-5.

These Wills, and the many others contained in the old Probate Records, made fascinating reading—giving us a delightful glance into the past. Regretfully, I handed them back to Captain Caswell.



The Captain continued:—Throughout the early Court Records (*State Papers of New Hampshire*: Vol. XXXX: *Court Records* 1640-1692 and *Court Papers*: 1652-1668) we find many references to the Shoals. Here are a few, picked at random:

"Att a Courte houlden the 26th of the 6th Mo: 1646 . . . William ffurbur Constable Jurat . . . Ordered that John Seely at the Ile of Sholes take the oath of a Constable before M^r Smyth." At this same session of "Courte" we find "Psented Phillip Chesly for beating his wife & for many bad speeches & theebery fined Ten shillings & stands bound in 10^l upon the good behaviour to all men & weomen to the next Court."



At Court held in Dover on August 3rd, 1648: "The grand Jurye Psented John Batten for being disteinged wth drinke & for fighting & quarreling upon the lords daye in time of meeting about the 12 of December upon Starre Islande. fined for all xx^s."



"The p^rsentments of the grand Jurie at the Courte helde at Dover the last of the 7 month 1650 . . . George Walton p^rsented for abuse the Lords daye in carrieinge boords goinge to the Isle of Sholes, witnes a comon fame." Mr. Walton comes in for additional grief with this further indictment: "George walton & Roberte mendam p^rsented for deliveringe men wine more then would doe them good at Starre Island while they did fighte witness Rice Codogens dafter fined V^s."



Thomas Turpine's bill of sale, recorded September 25th, 1650, testified to the fact that he had delivered ". . . unto William Seavie

ffysher man of the Isle of Sholes my thre Cowes with their Calves . . . in consideration of the some of Twentie pounds.”

An affadavit made by Hercules Hunking—a prosperous fishing proprietor at the Shoals—and entered “for the record” at Dover Court on August 21st, 1655 reads, in part: “shiped by the grace of God in good order & well Conditioned by mee Hercules Hunkins in & uppon the good ship called the blesings of Boston whearof is master under god for this Psent voyage Nathainell Robinsen and is now Ridinge at an anchor at the Ils of shoulls & by gods grace bound for Barbados to say eighteen quintals of Refus fish & on Barrill of Mackrill and is to be Delivered at the afore sayd port of Barbados.” It goes on to state that payment was to be received “in Dry marchantabull muscavados suger” and concludes “& so god send the shipe to her Desired Portt in saftye Amen. Dated at the Iels of Shoulls July 14th 1653.”



Hercules Hunking left an estate of £127-13-0 at the Shoals and property in Portsmouth valued at £342-1-3, when he died late in 1659. He was a wealthy man in those days.



On August 25th, 1660: “M^r Edward Loyd merch^t” appeared before Elias Stileman, Recorder of the Court at Portsmouth to “protest & declaire aga^t Mons^r James Richard Comand^r of the good ship Mary of Nance . . . In not taking in goods after they were by the s^d ship side two or three dayes, & for not setting sayle from the s^d River to y^e Iles of Sholes for to take in the rest of the s^d ships Lading.” Merchant Lloyd thus tells us of his interest in the Shoals and the cargo of fish—packed in hogsheads and awaiting the arrival of the Mary of Nance.



We read of the problems of wind and tide and weather and their effects upon the islanders: “At a Countie Court held in portsmouth 28th June 1664 . . . Rich:Com^{rs} Jn^o ffabins & Richard Jackson being som^{ons} to serve on the Gran Jury & were legally called & not appearing are Sentenced to pay a fine of 10 shill: a peece . . . Jn^o ffabins requesting the Court to take of his fine for that he was

becalmed coming from the Iles of Sholes & could not get hether sooner being witnessed by others standing by the Court doth remit the same."



At the same session "Cap^t Waldren m^r Jn^o Cutt m^r Richard Cutt M^r Nath: ffryer motioning to this court to have a Licence to sell strong waters by retaile w^{ch} is granted them the Libertie to retaile the same to their fishermen & servants."



In addition, this Court "being informed of y^e great need that there is of som to give entertainment to strangers on Starr Iland In the time of waying of fish" licensed James Waymouth and Richard Wilson "to Keepe a house of publick entertainment on Star Iland" subject to supervision by "m^r ffabius m^r Hunking & M^r Jose Masters." (The latter three may well be construed as the first of those estimable regulatory groups, namely—Liquor Control Boards. *Ed. Comment*). *Captain Caswell's features spread in a wry grin.*



Answering a petition of "Sundry of Star Island," the Court at Dover on June 29th 1669 ordered "that neither Cattle nor Swine shall run a Libertie on y^e s^d Island to annoy the fish & ffakes but if any doe keepe cattle & swine that they keepe their Cattle within enclosiers & their Swine in sties."



Captain Caswell smiled. I've always enjoyed reading this Presentment made to the Grand Jury at Dover on June 27th 1671. How lucky can you be? Here it is: "It appearing that Jer: Tibbett prison Keeper Opened y^e prison dore & Lett y^e prisoners have light & had like to have burned downe the prison the Court sentence him to repaire the prison at his owne cost as good as it before by y^e 15th July next or pay 5^l & ffees."

The Captain continued:—From these Probate and Court Records we get an insight, however brief, of those early times. Certainly it was active and, for many, prosperous. Undoubtedly it was exciting. Consider the governmental confusion alone. From 1628

until 1641, there was no colonial government, as such, in New-Hampshire. Maine was little better off. In 1635, as we have seen, the Shoals were divided between the Mason and Gorges interests. Finally, in 1641, Massachusetts-Bay Colony claimed the Province of Maine, and in that same year Massachusetts and New-Hampshire united. This union lasted until Charles II erected New-Hampshire into a separate Royal Province under President John Cutt in 1679. Ten years later New Hampshire reunited with Massachusetts-Bay after the people of New-Hampshire had risen against Governor Andros on April 18, 1689. This second union continued until 1692 when William III issued a new commission for the Province of New-Hampshire as well as a new charter for Massachusetts. The Bay Colony was to continue in her jurisdiction over Maine until even now—1800.



You can see how confusing this must have been to the Shoalers and it accounts for the difficulty in maintaining any consistency of regulation—let alone taxation—here in this remote island group. As an example: In 1677, the Massachusetts authorities attempted to collect the islanders' share of general government expense. Feeling ran high against such an assessment. The inhabitants must have felt that little benefit had or ever would accrue to themselves as a result of government activity on the mainland. Naturally this is a narrow view, but understandable when you consider that the Shoalers, being remote upon the sea, felt little need for any defence against the Indians during the frequent uprisings on the main. In addition they, being fishers of the sea, were of necessity a resourceful and ruggedly independent species.



In 1686, the government at Boston issued an order which reduced the Shoals from an important trading center and first port of call for many ships carrying cargo from overseas to the fishing center it originally had been and continued to be until the Revolution. This edict ended a five-year period during which custom fees were collected at Star Island from incoming vessels by Peter Twisden and John Faber, duly appointed as Collectors. The order stated "that no ships do unliver any part of their loading in the

Isles of Shoals before they have first entered with the collector of His Majesties Customs and also with the officer for receiving His Majesties Imposts and Revenues arising from wine, rum, &c. imported either in Boston, Salem, Piscataqua and that all ships and vessels trading to the eastward of Cape Porpus shall enter at some of the aforesaid ports or at the town of Falmouth in the Province of Maine."



Caswell continued:—January 1692 must have been an exciting month for the Shoalers. They were thrown into fear and consternation as a result of the Indian attack and pillage of neighboring York on the night of January 25th, 1692. Instigated by the French, the York Massacre—in which over one hundred inhabitants were killed, wounded, or captured—was another in a series of attacks against the coastal settlements during the Second Indian War (1688-1698). On the following day, the Shoalers, fearing an attack to be imminent, petitioned the Governor and Council of the Massachusetts Bay Colony at Boston asking them to send a company of 40 soldiers under a capable Captain to assist in the defence of the Isles. In response, Governor Simon Bradstreet and Council, under date of February 17th, 1692, instructed Captain Edward Willey "to Embarque with the Company under yo^r command, and make all possible dispatch unto the said Isles of Sholes, and in pursuance of yo^r Commission to intend their Ma^{ties} Service for the defence of the said Islands and repelling any attack of French or Indian Enemies." Captain Willey was further instructed "to Suppress and punish all Curseing, prophane Swearing drunkenness and other vices. And Let the worship of God be duly attended." Willey had his work cut out for him!



In his report of March 11th to Governor Bradstreet and Council Captain Willey describes his arrival at the Shoals:—"By the providence of the almighty god after being aboard wth my men two nights in an open Sloupe & one night ashore at Maruelhead, Tewsdai y^e 23th ffebruary in y^e morning we weyed ancor and ariued at the Isles of Shoales that night, whear we mett with kind reception from most of the Subscribers of y^e petission sent y^r Hon^{ors}."

Willey experienced difficulty in obtaining food and lodging for his men. Accordingly, he corresponded with "M^r Francis Wanewright, senor & M^r Andrew Dimond y^t lives at Ipswitch & M^r Nathaⁿ Baker of Boston"—three of the most important landowners and fishing proprietors at the Shoals during this time. It is interesting to note that this proves a point for those who hold absentee ownership in disfavour. In his letters to them, Willey asked that they assume their share of the soldiers' upkeep. Oddly enough, Wanewright, Diamond, and Baker had forbidden their fishermen and servants at the Shoals to either feed or lodge Willey's men. If they disobeyed it was to be at their individual expense.



The upshot of the matter was that the burden of support fell upon the less affluent Shoalers, and finally—the cost being too much—they again petitioned Boston asking that the soldiers be withdrawn stating that "our remedy . . . will without your further kindness, (in acceding to our petition) prove as bad, if not worse then the disease unto us."



This petition must have caused something of a minor digestive upset when placed before the good Governor and Council at Boston! In any event Captain Willey was instructed to withdraw. In a letter dated March 19th, he was admonished to "leave them to stand upon their own defence whil'st you remain Endeavour that the place be put into the best posture for defence it's capable of, and let yo^r souldiers be kept upon duty, not doubting of yo^r prudent Conduct of this whole Affayre; In which heavens blessing attend you."



Poor Captain Willey must have been glad to withdraw. The Shoals were a thorn in his side. Subsequently he petitioned Sir William Phips, who later in 1692 had been appointed the first Governor of the Royal Province of Massachusetts under the new charter of William and Mary. Willey "with his compaine and seamen aboard the ketch ffraternity . . . in the River of Cannada . . . (*met*) with a ffrrench barque bound to Quebeck; which we

attacked and brought a prize, unto the Honorable Sir William Phips, who was then in the river; who ordered Roger Stanor his boat swane, to command her, in the voyadge, with whom my Ensigne and four Souldiers being aboard; came to the Isle of Shoals, where she was run ashoare, though the Cargo (excepting salt) most pairt, with the riging saved, but imbezilled by the Command^r, And no pairt to the value of Twenty shilling came to the hands of yo^r petitioner, or those concerned in takeing her; either of what was betwixt decks, or in hould; The Ensigne and Souldiers loseing their cloaths, and armes." The petition goes on to state that "Two hundred and Thirty odd barrells of fflowr, and porke" had been brought to Boston from the Shoals. He concludes his plea by asking for his share and the share of his men in the sale of goods sold at Boston and that his soldiers' firearms be replaced.



Captain Caswell smiled. The judgment of Messrs. Wanewright, Diamond, and Baker proved correct, even if narrow minded, for the Indians did not attack that year—although it is known they so contemplated. Several years later, however, the French did capture and take away—in 1695—a number of fishing craft belonging to the Shoalers and, in 1724, during Lovewell's War, the Indians attacked the Shoals and made off with two shallops.



In 1696, the Isles of Shoals' most distinguished son, Sir William Pepperrell, was born on Appledore Island. His father, William Pepperrell, had come to the Shoals twenty years before from Cornwall, England, to engage in fishing. Young William was destined to move to Kittery on the banks of the Piscataqua, where he became one of the most influential citizens and wealthiest merchants of his day. In addition, his leadership was recognized by his appointment as the head of the Provincial Council for Maine. Appointed by Governor Shirley and Council to command the expedition against Louisburg during the French and Indian War, Pepperrell was given the rank of Lieutenant General. Leading his army of some 4000 Provincial troops gathered from Maine, New-Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Connecticut, the siege of Louisburg culminated with its surrender on June 16th, 1745. It

was a great victory for England and for the Colonies over the French. Pepperrell was knighted by the Crown for his services and was the first native-born American to receive such honor. Sir William's wealth undoubtedly had its beginnings in the fisheries conducted by his father and himself here at the Shoals.



During the 1700's, prosperity at the Isles slowly waned, *continued Captain Caswell*. In 1715, self government was finally to come to the Shoals. In that year the Provincial Assembly of New-Hampshire created the Town of Gosport on Star Island. Not until 1731—16 years after becoming a Town—do we find the beginnings of our *Town Records of Gosport*. *Caswell held up* a torn and rather threadbare volume and explained, somewhat sheepishly, that this constituted the "official record" from 1731 until 1773—after which time the yearly lapses became very much more pronounced than they were before. (*Town Records of Gosport* are now in the custody of the Secretary of State of New Hampshire at Concord.)



Ten years before the creation of the Town of Gosport the General Assembly of New-Hampshire, in 1705, voted to subscribe six pounds towards the support of The Reverend Daniel Greenleaf, after learning that Massachusetts—with jurisdiction over the northern islands—had agreed to provide fourteen pounds. In 1706, The Reverend Mr. Moody succeeded Mr. Greenleaf and ministered to the Shoalers until 1732 when he, in turn, was succeeded by The Reverend John Tucke. During 1720, a new meeting was built on Star Island to replace the one reputedly built in 1685. We can thank the efforts of Mr. Moody and the subscription of Two Hundred pounds by the inhabitants.



1720 found the islanders in financial difficulty. Richard Yeaton, a Selectman of Gosport, petitioned Governor Samuel Shute, asking that the Shoalers be excused from the Province Tax. Dated April 22nd, 1721, his petition states: "The people are very few in number and most of them are men of no substance, live only by

their daily fishing . . . The charge and expence which they are at in the support of the ministry is as great as the people can bear at present, it having cost them but layely the sum of Two Hundred Pounds for that end in building a Meeting House—which is not yet all paid. Though the Inhabitants have been very much richer and more numerous and their Trade greater than at present, yet they were not then rated, nor the Inhabitants in the Massachusetts Government. *They live on a Rock in the Sea*, and have not any Privilege of right in Common Lands as other Inhabitants in the respective Towns have.”



Again, in 1760, the Star Islanders begged for tax relief. Their petition to Governor Benning Wentworth fell on sympathetic ears, because the House of Representatives voted “that the sum of five hundred and Twelve pounds Eight shillings and one penny new Tenor . . . due from Gosport . . . be Remitted, and that the Treasurer be hereby Intitled to charge the said sum to the Province.”

The town fathers of Gosport must have been popular men, indeed, when this news reached the Shoals!



And so, *resumed Captain Caswell*, we come to September 1773 when The Reverend Mr. Tucke passed away at Gosport. Mr. Tucke loved these Islands. He lived here with us for over 41 years and he understood us. In 1766, when the people at Gosport petitioned Governor Benning Wentworth asking permission “to set up and carry on a Public Lottery”—the proceeds of which were to build a breakwater in the harbor—Mr. Tucke’s signature appeared first among the seventy-seven petitioners. The request was granted, but the lottery was unsuccessful and the idea abandoned.



Mr. Tucke must have had a hand in keeping, or at least causing to be kept, the *Town Records*. It must be more than coincidence that during his 41 years here (1732-1773) these records are reasonably well maintained. Let me read you a few excerpts which indicate how the inhabitants felt towards Mr. Tucke.

Caswell reads:—"This is to Notifie the freeholders and others the inhabitants of Star Island alias Gosport duely Qualify'd to Vote, that they meet together at the House of Cap^t Robert Downes on said Star Island Monday next at nine of the Clock in the Forenoon to give the Reverend M^r John Tucke a Call to settle among us in the work of the Ministry and to pass a Vote what annuall Salary to give him, and to do any thing Else in that affair that may be thought proper."

*Dated at Star Island
the 11th December 1731*

Robert Downes)
Francis Combs : *Select Men*
George Collings)



On the 13th of December, in response to this call, the people met as planned; voted to Call Mr. Tucke, set his annual salary at £110—two thirds to be paid by the last of May, the remaining third by the end of September. In addition they voted him Fifty Pounds by the last of May 1732, "towards building him a House." Also they voted "to give (*him*) a convenient place to sett his House upon & a garden Spot." A committee was chosen to wait upon Mr. Tucke and it was voted that they would "proceed to ordain (*him*) some Convenient time next Spring in case he accepts of what is voted above."



At a town meeting held the following 28th of April, 1732, the Call was renewed and confirmed. In addition, it was also voted to allow Mr. Tucke "the Privilege of keeping one Cow."



The Selectmen waited upon Mr. Tucke, who was present in the town, while the town meeting awaited a reply. Mr. Tucke made this response:

"*Brethren*: It is some time since you Called me to y^e work of the ministry among you to w^{ch} call by reason of many discouragements & withal the very heavy Stroake of Providence w^{ch} has be-

fallen me among you has deferr'd my answer till this time, and now by the Committee sent to me by you I understand that you have renew'd that Call and confirm'd former offers, & al'so hoping that there is a prospect of doing Good among you, I rely'ing on the Strength of Divine Grace accept of You Call to me." The "heavy Stroake of Providence" Mr. Tucke refers to is the death of his young son.



In 1747 this entry appears: "Added to the ministers Salery *Thirty Pounds* Old Tenour."



On "March y^e 25th 1750 By a Legal Town meeting . . . A generell free vote past a mongst the in habetence of gosport for y^e Revr^d mr John Tucks Sallery to be paid in winter or Spring marchⁿ (*merchantable*) Cod fish."



On the 28th of March 1752 it was "Put to a Vote Whether Every Person who is owner of a Cow on this Place (Except M^r Tuck) and shall neglect to Carry it off from the Island after the 20 Day of May Next till the last of September Next Shall Pay for evry Days fault herein the Sume of Ten Shillings for the use of the Poor of Said Place."



Why, *continued Captain Caswell*, the people wouldn't even let their Minister carry his fire wood from the stages—where it was brought from the mainland—to his Parsonage. They voted "that Every fall of the year when (*Mr Tucke*) has his wood to carray hom Euary men (*who*) will not Come that is abel to Com shall pay forty shillings ould tener."



Mr. Tucke maintained *The Record of the Church of Gosport* (in custody of The New Hampshire Historical Society at Concord) during his long ministry here. We find, for instance, that his son, John Tucke was admitted as a Communicant of the Church on August 22nd, 1756. On September 13th, 1761—an entry tells

us—"The Rev^d M^r John Tucke of Epsom, going to be Ordain'd there" is dismissed to the Church in Epsom. This younger John Tucke was born, we believe, at Gosport. Another entry records on June 4th 1766 that "M^r Jeffry Muchmore & M^{rs} Love Tucke were Joyned in Marriage." Love Tucke was the youngest daughter of The Reverend and Mrs. Tucke.



Captain Caswell got up from his chair and walked to the window. Turning to me, he continued: You know, in a way it is Providential that Mr. Tucke passed away before 1775 when the order was given to abandon the Shoals. He would have hated to see things break up out here. If he were here now I'm sure he'd be mighty pleased to know we've set November 24th, next, in this Year of 1800, to dedicate our new Meeting House. It's stone constructed and replaces the old frame one which burned back in 1790. The Reverend Jedediah Morse, who's been here this year, will hold the Dedication Service.



Captain Caswell concluded:—I have only given you a few of the many things that can be said about the Shoals, but I hope you have enjoyed its flavour. One last thing, though. In September 1775, John Wentworth, the last Governor of the Royal Province of New-Hampshire arrived here from Boston. I was just a lad at the time, but it made an impression I'll never forget. The Revolution had begun. Bunker Hill had been fought the previous June and The Shoalers were preparing to leave the islands. Just about this time of month, a British Man-of-War stood in to the Islands and dropped anchor here in Gosport Harbor. The next morning, Governor Wentworth came ashore and meeting with many of the people—some of whom he must have known from happier days—issued his *Proclamation* for the adjournment of the rebellious Assembly on the mainland.



Wentworth, loyal to his King and to the people of New-Hampshire, had found he could not serve two masters. Some months before, he had left the Governor's Mansion at Portsmouth and taken refuge in Fort William and Mary. After the fort had been

dismantled, he sailed aboard the *Scarborough*, a British warship, for the comparative safety of General Gage's Boston. Returning to New-Hampshire soil—Star Island and Gosport—he performed his last official act—The Proclamation. It fell on deaf ears, of course, and after delaying to see what effect it would have, if any, upon the people on the mainland, he sailed for England!

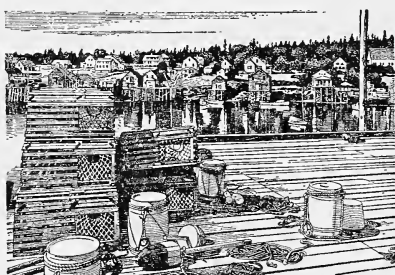


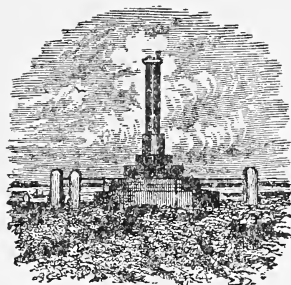
We may wonder whether Wentworth's thoughts *turned back 278 years*: to Captain John Cabot's voyage of 1497—the basis for England's claims and subsequent settlement of the distant shores which passed before his eyes. As his Province of New-Hampshire—faintly seen—and The Isles of Shoals slipped further and further astern, Governor Wentworth even may have smiled, remembering the quaint and curious Shoalers. Perhaps his thoughts echoed Richard Yeaton's petition, made years before: "*They Live on a Rock in the Sea!*"

THE END

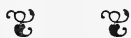


*"Actorum Memores simul
affectamus Agenda!"*





THIS NEWCOMEN ADDRESS, *dealing with the colorful history of the ISLES OF SHOALS, was delivered at the "1957 New Hampshire Dinner" of The Newcomen Society in North America, held at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, U.S.A., on September 17, 1957. MR. PENROSE, the guest of honor, was introduced by the SENIOR VICE-PRESIDENT FOR NORTH AMERICA, in the Society. The luncheon was presided over by RICHARD W. SULLOWAY of Franklin; President, The Franklin National Bank; Past-Chairman, Industrial Development Committee, New England Council, Boston; Chairman of the New Hampshire Committee, in American Newcomen.*

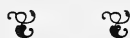




Acknowledgment

THE AUTHOR makes grateful acknowledgment to Miss DOROTHY VAUGHAN, *Librarian*, THE PORTSMOUTH PUBLIC LIBRARY; *Past-President*, NEW HAMPSHIRE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION; *Member*, AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION; *Trustee*, PORTSMOUTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY; *Director*, THOMAS BAILEY ALDRICH MEMORIAL; *Member*, NEW HAMPSHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY; *Member*, NEW ENGLAND HISTORIC AND GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY, Boston; *Member*, *Board of Governors*, THE WARNER HOUSE ASSOCIATION. Miss Vaughan, whose knowledge of and work in historical research in Northern New England are well known, has rendered valuable assistance in furnishing source material used herein. My thanks.

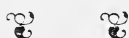
—CHARLES PENROSE, JR.





“During *Nineteen Hundred and Fifty-Seven* we have seen two interesting and dramatic commemorative occasions take place at Plymouth, Massachusetts and at Jamestown, Virginia. Separate yet related in the perspective of our Country’s early history, these historic celebrations tend to make our present discussion of The Isles of Shoals timely and certainly not inappropriate.”

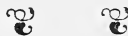
—CHARLES PENROSE, JR.



WHARVES.

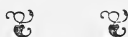
Batchelder's, opposite Raynes's.
 Bell's, (*Est. And. W.*) Short st.; Mechanic's street,
 next east of Cotton's.
 Spinney's, (*Daniel H.*) rear 1 Green street.
 Central, (*Pier Co.*) head Daniel street.
 Commercial, (*Hale & Rollins*) from 10 Water st.
 Cotton's (*Leonard*) Water st. next south Liberty
 bridge; Mechanic st. next south heirs Wm. Gard-
 ner's; Charles st. between estates of J. Jones and
 T. Safford's; Hancock st. opposite No. 5.
 Currier's (*Thos.*) adj. Slaughter h. Mechanic st.
 Gardner's (*heirs of Wm.*) op. 9 Mechanic st.
 Goodrich's (*Jere. D. et al.*) from 13 Water st. adj.
 Commercial.
 Goodrich's (*Moses H. & brothers*) adjoining tan-
 nery, rear 1 North street.
 Exchange (*Martin & Fernald, and others*) from 96
 Market, head Deer, to 98 Market.
 Foundry, (*L. D. Spalding, T. L. Tullock and oth-
 ers, trustees*) fm. Shackford's, to Wendell's
 Foundry, (*Ports. Iron Foundry*) Mechanic st.
 Hale & Rollins's (see Commercial)
 Hale's (*Sam'l*) adj. Slaughter h. head Dearborn st.
 Haven's (*estate of John*) from D. H. Treadwell's,
 rear 25 and 26 Bow st. to Yeaton's, also the wf
 rear 34 and 35 Bow street, formerly Day's.
 Haven's (*estate of John*) see Ladd & Haven.
 Haven's (*heirs N. A.*) next southerly of wf. form-
 erly Day's, extending to heirs of Jacob Sheafe's.
 Hill's (*heirs Samuel*) & Ladd (*Alexander*) back of
 Spring Market, Ceres st.
 Huntress's (*heirs Joshua L.*) foot Hunking st.
 Jaffrey's (*Gco.*) fm Spr. m'ket to heirs I. Rindge's.
 Ladd's (*Alex'r*) rear 80 Market, foot Ceres st. (for-
 merly called Moffat wf.)

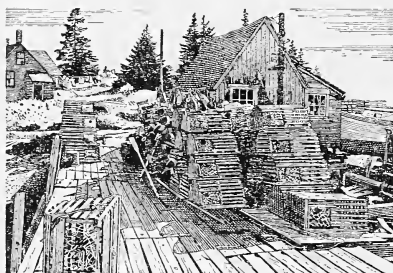
THE WHARVES OF PORTSMOUTH *were important to
 the inhabitants of the Isles of Shoals. Along the banks
 of the Piscataqua River, they furnished berths
 for many vessels.*



Ladd (*Alex'r*) see heirs Sam'l Hill & Ladd.
 Ladd's (*Henry*) and Haven's (*John*) from Moffat
 wf. to Hill & Ladd's.
 Lighton's (*J. W.*) next N. E. fm. D. H. Spinney's;
 and rear 105 and 107 Market st.
 Lighton's, (*heirs Luke M.*) from 8 Mechanic st.
 Lighton's (*heirs Mark*) rear 5 Green st.
 Lighton's (*heirs Samuel*) from 6 Mechanic st.
 Long, from 22 Water street.
 Lowd's (*David*) rear 42 Bow st.
 Marshall's (*Nath'l*) adj. shop 49 Water street.
 Melcher's (*George*) rear 3 Mechanic st.
 Melcher's (*George*) & Salter (*John*) south of Long-
 Moffat, (see Alex'r Ladd's.)
 Noble's (*M. & J.*) Noble's Island.
 Odiorne's (*Thomas*) adj. shop Manning Place.
 Peirce's (*heirs John*) Mechanic st.; and opposite 24
 Washington street.
 Peirce's, (*Nath'l*) opposite h No. 95 Water.
 Pier, (*Pier Co.*) head of State st.; Pier Co. own
 all wharves fm. ft. Daniel st. to heirs J. Sheafe's.
 Pray's (*estate Samuel*) from 117 Market st.
 Railroad (*Eastern*) from heirs M. Lighton, Green
 st. to old Ferry-way, (formerly Rindge's.)
 Railway, (*Marine Railway Co.*) from 34 Water st.
 Raynes's (*George*) adj. ship yard.
 Rice's (*heirs Alex'r*) Noble's Isl. & r. 103 Market st.
 Rindge's, (see Railroad.)
 Rindge's, (*heirs Isaac*) rear 17 and 21 Bow st.
 Shackford's (*Wm. M.*) rear 43 Bow.
 Sheafe's (*Sam'l*) from Moffat wf. to heirs T. Sheafe.
 Sheafe's, (*heirs Thos.*) fm. Town wf. to S. Sheafe's.
 Sheafe's, (*heirs Jacob*) adj. old bakery Bow st. and
 from 6 Water street.
 Town, ends of Deer, Daniel, State, Court, Gates,
 and of some other streets.
 Treadwell's (*Daniel H.*) rear 24 Bow street.
 Union, (*S. B. Lord*) opposite 49 Water st.
 Vaughan's (*Wm. A.*) rear of house Manning st.
 Wendell's (*Jacob*) next south of Foundry.
 Yeaton's, (*J. Yeaton, S. H. Simes*) rear 33 Bow.

THIS LIST OF WHARVES appeared in the "Portsmouth
 City Directory" for 1839. Many wharves were in exist-
 ence during the Colonial period, when New
 Hampshire's Port was thriving.

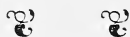


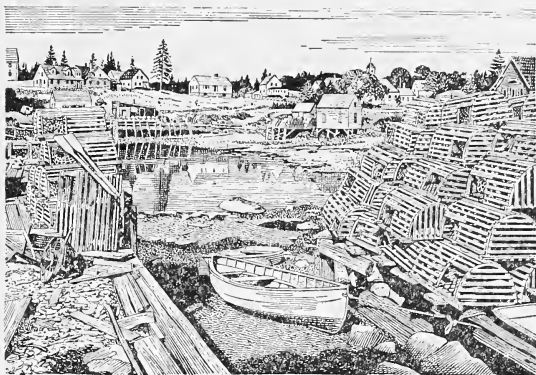


“I suggest we find ourselves, *in retrospect*, in the Year 1800.

“The War of Independence is history. America, under President John Adams, is cautiously confident but dependent, in great measure, upon her ocean commerce. We are in Portsmouth, New-Hampshire upon banks of the swift flowing Piscataqua River which divides the State of New Hampshire and the District of Maine. Making our way through the bustling streets past the New-Hampshire Hotel, we come to the famous Portsmouth Pier where we are to meet Captain John Caswell of Gosport Village, Star Island, Isles of Shoals.”

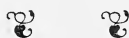
—CHARLES PENROSE, JR.





“As we stroll through Portsmouth’s lanes, *in the Year 1800*, we are amazed by what we see. The Portsmouth Pier, recently completed and unfortunately destined to burn to the water in the great conflagration of 1813, stretches out into the Piscataqua 340 feet with a breadth of 60 feet. On its south side a warehouse divided into 14 stores extends 321 feet along the pier, 30 feet wide, and 3 stories high. Facing it along the north side of the pier is a similar warehouse divided into 2 stores. These stores are brimming with merchandise—liquors, molasses, sugar, salt, coffee, and other goods brought to Portsmouth by her fleet of ocean-going vessels.”

—CHARLES PENROSE, JR.

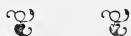




“Again, *in retrospect in September 1800*, we accompany Captain Caswell on this short voyage from Portsmouth to the Isles of Shoals:

“Jumping aboard the *Hannah Starr*, we cast off and take good advantage of the wind and the fast-running Piscataqua’s ebb tide. Following the winding channel we pass Fernald’s Island, destined to be purchased by the United States Government from Captain William Dennett in 1806 for the establishment of a Naval Shipyard. Quickly the busy wharves, the church steeples, and the handsome mansions of Portsmouth fade in the sparkling brilliance of a mid-September cloudless afternoon. Captain Caswell points out the quaint, elm-shaded villages of Kittery and Kittery Point, Maine, with Gerrish and Cutts Islands beyond, which slip by to port. An equally picturesque New Castle passes on our starboard side as we approach old Fort William and Mary—known as Fort Constitution since the Revolution. We emerge onto the broad swells of the majestic Atlantic and feel the breeze quicken.”

—CHARLES PENROSE, JR.

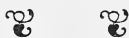


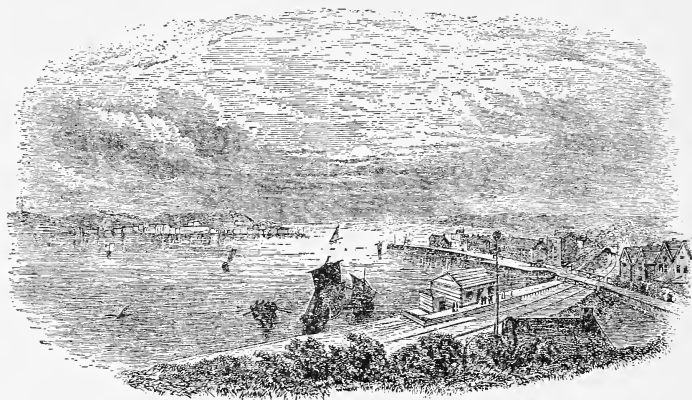


“Governor Wentworth, in September 1775, came ashore on the Isles of Shoals as he was preparing to take refuge in England.

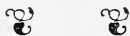
“As he finally departed for London, we may wonder whether his thoughts *turned back 278 years*: to Captain John Cabot’s voyage of 1497—the basis for England’s claims and subsequent settlement of the distant shores which passed before his eyes. As his Province of New-Hampshire—faintly seen—and The Isles of Shoals slipped further and further astern, Governor Wentworth even may have smiled, remembering the quaint and curious Shoalers. Perhaps his thoughts echoed Richard Yeaton’s petition, made years before: *‘They Live on a Rock in the Sea!’* ”

—CHARLES PENROSE, JR.





“THE SEAS DID RAGE!” might have been the title of this Newcomen manuscript. Wind and weather, fogs and tides, hurricanes and tornadoes—to all of these were the stout-hearted fishermen at Gosport and throughout the Isles of Shoals subjected, during the many years in the Colonial period when they “lived on a Rock” and worked in the waters of the Great Deep! Despite every obstacle did they persist—in the American tradition.





THE NEWCOMEN SOCIETY *in North America*

MORE THAN 30 years ago, the late L. F. Loree (1858-1940) of New York, then dean of American railroad presidents, established a group now known as "American Newcomen" and interested in Material History, as distinguished from political history. Its objectives center in the beginnings, growth, development, contributions, and influence of Industry, Transportation, Communication, the Utilities, Mining, Agriculture, Banking, Finance, Economics, Insurance, Education, Invention, and the Law—these and correlated historical fields. In short, the background of those factors which have contributed or are contributing to the progress of Mankind.

The Newcomen Society in North America is a voluntary association, with headquarters in Uwchlan Township, Chester County, within the fox-hunting countryside of Eastern Pennsylvania and 32 miles West of the City of Philadelphia. Here also is located The Thomas Newcomen Library, a reference collection open for research and dealing with the subjects to which the Society devotes attention.

Meetings are held throughout the United States of America and across Canada at which Newcomen Addresses are presented by leaders in their respective fields. These manuscripts represent a broadest coverage of phases of Material History involved, both American and Canadian.

The approach in most cases has been a life-story of corporate organizations, interpreted through the ambitions, the successes and failures, and the ultimate achievements of those pioneers whose efforts laid the foundations of the particular enterprise.

The Society's name perpetuates the life and work of Thomas Newcomen (1663-1729), the British pioneer, whose valuable contributions in improvements to the newly invented Steam Engine brought him lasting fame in the field of the Mechanic Arts. The Newcomen Engines, whose period of use was from 1712 to 1775, paved a way for the Industrial Revolution. Newcomen's inventive genius preceded by more than 50 years the brilliant work in Steam by the world-famous James Watt.



Members of American Newcomen, when in Europe, are invited by the Dartmouth Newcomen Association to visit the home of Thomas Newcomen at Dartmouth in South Devonshire, England, where the festival of "Newcomen Day" is celebrated each year on the anniversary, August 16th, of his death.



*"The roads you travel so briskly
lead out of dim antiquity,
and you study the past chiefly because
of its bearing on the living present
and its promise for the future."*

—LIEUTENANT GENERAL JAMES G. HARBORD,
K.C.M.G., D.S.M., LL.D., U.S. ARMY (RET.)

(1866-1947)

*Late American Member of Council at London
The Newcomen Society of England*





University of
Connecticut
Libraries



39153004669372

